



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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WILLIAM T FUJIOKA
Chief Executive Officer

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Fifth District

September 10, 2009

To: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: William T Fujioka
Chief Executive Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. T. Fujioka", is written over the printed name of the Chief Executive Officer.

STATUS REPORT ON BOARD MOTION TO SEEK TEMPORARY WAIVERS AND/OR OTHER LEGISLATIVE REMEDIES TO MODIFY THE CURRENT ASSET AND/OR INCOME ELIGIBILITY LIMITS FOR THE CalWORKs AND FOOD STAMP PROGRAMS

This is to provide your Board with a status on the efforts to seek temporary waivers or legislative remedies to modify current income or asset limits. On April 7, 2009, your Board approved a motion directing the Chief Executive Officer and the Sacramento advocates in conjunction with the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) to seek temporary waivers and/or other legislative remedies to modify current asset and/or income eligibility limits for CalWORKs and/or Food Stamp benefits to assist families and individuals severely impacted by the recession, but who do not currently qualify for these programs.

Since your Board adopted this motion, on July 28, 2009, the Governor signed the FY 2009-10 Revised State Budget Act to resolve an estimated \$24.0 billion deficit, which combined with the \$36.0 billion in solutions enacted in February, has resulted in over \$60.0 billion in budget solutions this year. Some of the approved solutions include major funding reductions to human services programs, such as CalWORKs, which precluded the Legislature from considering any expansion of program eligibility to low-income families in the first year of the Legislative Session. However, this office, the Sacramento Advocates and DPSS have focused efforts on the following items:

- **CalWORKs Asset Limits.** On June 5, 2009, the County took a position to support AB 1058 (Beall) which, as amended on August 17, 2009, would exempt the value of motor vehicles from the CalWORKs eligibility asset test. The current vehicle asset

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limit is \$4,650. According to DPSS, AB 1058 would ensure that families have reliable transportation to travel to work or school, attend training, and to take children to child care and thereby increase the ability of these families to sustain employment and become self-sufficient. Because of the State's ongoing fiscal crisis, AB 1058 was held on the Senate Appropriations suspense file due to costs and is now a two-year bill. **The Sacramento Advocates will continue to advocate passage of this measure when the Legislature addresses it in the second year of the session.**

- **Use of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Emergency Contingency Funds (ECF) to Assist Low-Income Families.** ABX4 4, the Human Services Budget Trailer Bill, which expands the eligible service population under the TANF ECF fund to include non-CalWORKs needy families, was enacted on July 28, 2009. This measure allows the County to draw down ECF funds to cover 80 percent of the cost for subsidized employment, and short-term nonrecurring benefits for families with a minor child when the family income is less than 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. This measure allows the County to expand ECF-funded subsidized employment opportunities to non-CalWORKs families.
- **Food Stamp Asset Limits.** AB 433, which was enacted in 2008, eliminated the Food Stamp asset test for families with minor children who are not eligible to CalWORKs, but receive any TANF-related service. This measure required California to establish expanded eligibility by July 1, 2009, and to fully implement the program for new applicants by January 1, 2010. DPSS indicates that it implemented the expanded program effective August 1, 2009, which is five months ahead of the State deadline.

This office and DPSS will continue to work with the Sacramento and Washington, D.C. advocates to pursue legislative options to modify the income and/or asset limits for CalWORKs and Food Stamp Programs to help families and individuals affected by the economic recession and the State's fiscal crisis.

We will continue to keep you apprised.

WTF:RA
MR:VE:sb

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel
Department of Public Social Services